

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Southern District of Texas

United States Courts Southern
District of Texas

FILED

02/12/2022

United States of America

v.

HERNANDEZ, Clarissa
MORALES, Sarah

Case No. C-22-168M

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 02-11-2022 in the county of Brooks in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

21 U.S.C., 841(b)(1)(A)
21 U.S.C., 846

Offense Description

Knowingly, intentionally, and unlawfully possess with the intent to distribute a controlled substance in Schedule II of the Controlled Substance Act of 1970, to wit: 28 kilograms, approximate gross weight of cocaine; 327 grams, approximate gross weight of fentanyl; 4,974 grams, approximate gross weight of oxycodone. And Schedule I of the Controlled Substance Act of 1970, to wit: 906 grams, approximate gross weight of heroin.

Attempt and conspiracy.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complainant's signature

Sarah Salinas, DEA Task Force Officer

Printed name and title

Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.

Date: February 12, 2022.City and state: Corpus Christi, Texas

Judge's signature

Julie K. Hampton, United States Magistrate Judge

Printed name and title

ATTACHMENT "A"

HERNANDEZ, Clarissa
MORALES, Sarah

On February 11, 2022, Border Patrol Agent (BPA) Kathryn Krukowski was conducting primary inspection duties at the Falfurrias Border Patrol checkpoint near Falfurrias, Texas. At approximately 12:45 A.M. a red in color 2014 Chevrolet Captiva approached the primary lane for inspection. As the vehicle came to a stop, BPA Krukowski greeted the driver and asked the driver, later identified as Clarissa HERNANDEZ, where she was traveling to. HERNANDEZ stated she was going to Houston and that she had been in Mexico for surgery. BPA Krukowski noticed that there was no luggage and a spare tire in the rear of the vehicle. BPA Krukowski noticed that HERNANDEZ would look away from BPA Krukowski during questioning. During the questioning, BPA Jorge Coria along with USBP service canine "Torino" was conducting a free air sniff of the vehicle's exterior and subsequently alerted to the rear cargo area of the vehicle. BPA Krukowski directed HERNANDEZ to proceed to the secondary inspection area and wait for further instructions.

As HERNANDEZ drove to the secondary inspection area, BPA Krukowski observed a second vehicle, identified as a black in color 2014 Ford Edge, approach another primary inspection lane being operated by BPA G. Escareno. BPA Krukowski observed the 2014 Ford Edge failed to stop at that primary inspection lane and BPA Krukowski had to yell for the vehicle to stop. As BPA Krukowski ordered the 2014 Ford Edge to stop, the driver, and sole occupant was later identified as Sarah MORLAES, BPA Krukowski noticed that MORALES appeared to be extremely nervous and wanted to abruptly leave. MORALES stated that she usually goes through the other lanes, so she did not know she needed to stop. MORALES stated that she was also going to Houston, Texas returning from Mexico visiting a family member. BPA Krukowski did not observe MORALES to have any luggage in her vehicle. While BPA Krukowski was speaking to MORALES, BPA Coria utilizing USBP service canine "Torino" proceeded to conduct a free-air sniff of the exterior of the vehicle, resulting in service canine "Torino" alerting to the presence of narcotics near the bumper of the vehicle. BPA Krukowski asked MORALES if BP Agents could check the trunk of her vehicle. MORALES stated "YES". BPA Krukowski noticed the behavior of both MORALES and HERNANDEZ were similar, and the destination/return point that MORALES and HERNANDEZ stated to BPA Krukowski was also the same. BPA Krukowski referred MORALES to the secondary inspection area.

Once in secondary inspection area, the occupants were instructed to exit from both vehicles and a systematic canine search on both vehicle was performed. Service canine "Torino" again alerted to the presence of narcotics around the bumper areas of both vehicles. BPA Coria requested that both vehicles be scanned by the Z-portal to see if any anomalies were detected or visible due to the canine alert.

After the vehicle was scanned, the 2014 Ford Edge was placed on the mechanics hydraulic lift where the rear bumper was removed and BP agents noticed a makeshift bumper rail which concealed four (4) bundles. BP agents removed the bundles, and ASBPA Fernando Ayon and BPA Coria conducted a field test; three (3) bundles tested positive for heroin and weighed approximately 906 grams (approximately gross weight), and one (1) bundle weighing approximately 327 grams (approximate gross weight) tested positive for fentanyl. Further inspection of the front bumper revealed twelve (12) bundles weighing approximately 12 kilograms, concealed within the same type of aftermarket bumper rail. ASBPA Fernando Ayon and BPA Coria conducted a field test of the one of the twelve (12) bundles which tested positive for cocaine.

The 2014 Chevrolet Captiva was then inspected and contained the same characteristics of concealment. BP agents removed both bumpers and observed fifteen (15) bundles weighing approximately 16 kilograms (approximate gross weight) of cocaine wrapped in cellophane and sixteen (16) bundles containing approximately 32,500 oxycodone pills weighing approximately 4.9 kilograms wrapped in cellophane. ASBPA Fernando Ayon and BPA Coria conducted a field test of the packages which tested positive for cocaine and oxycodone.

MORALES and HERNANDEZ were placed under arrest and transported inside the USBP checkpoint in Falfurrias, Texas, for further processing. According to Border Patrol Report of apprehension or seizure, BP Agents located approximately \$4,000.00 U.S. currency (USC) hidden inside HERNANDEZ's undergarments.

On February 11, 2022, DEA Corpus Christi Resident Office (CCRO) Task Force Officer (TFO) Sarah Salinas and TFO Orlando Alvarez arrived at the US Border Patrol Checkpoint in Falfurrias, Texas, and made contact with Clarissa HERNANDEZ. TFO Salinas, as witnessed by TFO Alvarez, advised HERNANDEZ of her Miranda Warnings in the English language. HERNANDEZ acknowledged understanding, indicated so by signing the Miranda Warning form, and agreed to make a statement without an attorney. HERNANDEZ stated that she didn't know anything about the drugs. HERNANDEZ stated that she purchased her vehicle, 2014 Chevrolet Captiva, approximately one-month ago in Houston, Texas, and that she is the only person who drives that vehicle. HERNANDEZ stated that she traveled to Mexico with MORALES in separate vehicles.

TFO Salinas and TFO Alvarez then made contact with Sarah MORALES. TFO Salinas, as witnessed by TFO Alvarez, advised MORALES of her Miranda Warnings in the English language. MORALES acknowledged understanding, indicated so by signing the Miranda Warning form. MORALES stated that she did not want to make any statement and requested an attorney. TFO Salinas and TFO Alvarez did not ask MORALES any questions regarding this case.

AUSA Robert Thorpe was contacted and approved the federal prosecution of HERNANDEZ and MORALES.

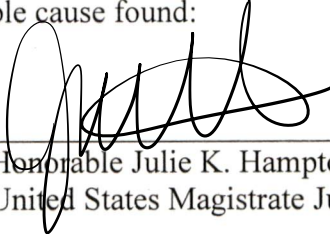
HERNANDEZ and MORALES were subsequently transported to Coastal Bend Detention Center in Robstown, Texas, for holding pending further judicial proceedings.

The amount of cocaine, heroin, fentanyl and oxycodone seized infers the intent to distribute.



Sarah Salinas, Task Force Officer
Drug Enforcement Administration

Submitted by reliable electronic means, sworn to, signature attested telephonically per Fed.R.Crim.P.4.1, and probable cause found:



Honorable Julie K. Hampton
United States Magistrate Judge